

CONNECTIONS

NAMI Yakima Support Groups ... Join One Today!

Local Support Groups Poised for Continued Service & Expansion

The heart of NAMI Yakima's mission lies in its desire to provide 'family and mental health consumer centered' support, education, and advocacy services here in our Yakima Valley communities. One primary means of reaching this goal is through NAMI Yakima support groups.

In the coming months, NAMI Yakima will be focusing its efforts on working with those we serve to make sure that support groups offer the best possible kinds of support and other resources available. As part of those goals, we will be engaging in a number of projects. They include:

- A new framework for current support groups
- Expansion of the kinds of groups offered
- Recruitment of new support group facilitators

In order to accomplish these goals, we'll need the aid and expertise of all of you - our members, our community partners, our local providers, and others. Here's how you can help:

- Make time to attend a NAMI Yakima support group. Bipolar Disorder and Family Member groups currently meet from 6 - 9 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at Wellness House in Yakima. (You'll find more information inside this newsletter.)
- Let us know what other kinds of groups you'd like to see offered.
- Offer your own empathy and willingness to volunteer. Train to become a NAMI Yakima support group facilitator.

Please contact our office any time with your questions, ideas, and other feedback. Together, we have and will continue to make a difference for those affected by mental illness in our communities.



*Flowers, by Matt, age 11
Courtesy of the Child &
Adolescent Bipolar Foundation*

In This Issue

**Program
Updates**

**Veteran's
Resource Center**

NAMI Walk

Book Review

**Children's Mental
Health**

NAMI Day

**President's
Corner**

and MORE



President's Corner Looking back, looking forward



As I sit to write my last President's Corner on this beautiful spring morning, I'm filled with a sense of renewal, excitement and hope. These past two years as President of NAMI Yakima have flown by, but in that time we've made significant strides toward re-energizing and strengthening the organization.

When we started this journey of building a solid foundation and moving NAMI Yakima forward, we had a vision of what needed to be done and how we'd accomplish goals that were set. Here are some of the major highlights of the past two years:

- We hired our first Operations Manager in March 2007. Thanks to her tireless dedication and hard work, I'm pleased to announce the Board of Directors promoted Lori Gendron to Executive Director in March 2008.
- We reinstated our community symposiums and in the fall of 2007, we had attendance that exceeded 100 people. Many were new to NAMI and had never attended one of our educational offerings before.
- We launched a new educational class this March that we've wanted to bring to Yakima for years. The first Visions for Tomorrow class is up and running with full enrollment and plans are already in the works for a second Visions class later this year.
- We secured funding through the Yakima Valley Community Foundation that has allowed NAMI Yakima to begin expanding its services in the criminal justice arena.

We've experienced amazing growth in a short amount of time and people in the community are starting to take notice. None of this forward movement could have happened without the dedication and hard work of the Board, community supporters, and our members. Change is never easy and it took courage and faith to realize NAMI Yakima needed to and could transition into the 21st century. The beneficiaries of our efforts will be the families and community members in need of the support, education and advocacy work we do on behalf of people with serious mental illnesses.

I invite all of you to join us in June at our annual meeting when we'll celebrate our accomplishments and look to the future. Thank you for the honor and privilege of leading this organization through this phase of its development. You have my deepest appreciation and admiration for your continued dedication to an organization that is vital to the health and well-being of our community.

SAVE THE DATE
NAMI Yakima Annual Meeting
Tuesday, June 24th, 2008 - 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Harman Center, Yakima
Please RSVP 509.453.0753 / info@namiyakima.org



Depressed Adolescents Respond Best to Combination Treatment Psychotherapy Combined with Antidepressant Medication Most Effective

A combination of psychotherapy and antidepressant medication appears to be the most effective treatment for adolescents with major depressive disorder—more than medication alone or psychotherapy alone, according to results from a major clinical trial funded by the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The study was published in the October 2007 issue of the Archives of General Psychiatry.

The long-term results of the Treatment for Adolescents with Depression Study (TADS) found that when adolescents received fluoxetine (Prozac) alone or in combination with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) over the course of 36 weeks, they recovered faster than those who were receiving CBT alone.

However, taking fluoxetine alone appeared to pose some safety concerns for the teens. During treatment, those taking fluoxetine alone had higher rates of suicidal thinking (15 percent) than those in combination treatment (8 percent) and those in CBT alone (6 percent), particularly in the early stages of treatment. This suggests that while treatment with fluoxetine may speed recovery, adding CBT provides additional safeguards for those vulnerable to suicide, according to the researchers.

"Depression in teens is a serious illness that can and should be treated aggressively," said NIMH Director Thomas R. Insel, M.D. "TADS provides compelling evidence for families and clinicians that the most effective way to treat depression in teens is with a two-pronged approach. It reassures us that antidepressant medication combined with psychotherapy is an effective and safe way to help teens recover from this disabling illness."

Results at 36 weeks of treatment were consistent with those found at 12 weeks in the 439-person study, when NIMH reported that combination treatment produced the greatest improvement in teenagers with major depression. At 18 weeks (results not previously reported), combination treatment still outpaced the other treatments with an 85 percent response rate, compared to 69 percent for fluoxetine alone and 65 percent for CBT alone. By 36 weeks, the response rate to combination treatment still remained the highest (86 percent), while response rates to fluoxetine and CBT essentially caught up, at 81 percent each.

"In the combination approach, the two treatments complemented each other," said John March, M.D., MPH, of Duke University and lead author of the study. "The fluoxetine can help dissipate the physical symptoms of major depression relatively quickly, and CBT can help patients develop new skills to contend with difficult, negative emotions."

Because the trial sample included a mix of younger and older teens, both genders, substantial minority representation and variable socioeconomic status, the TADS results can be applied broadly to the adolescent population.

**For more information,
support and other resources
about child and adolescent
mental health, visit the CAAC
at www.nami.org**



NAMI offers up to date Veteran's Resource Center

Recent studies tell us that nearly a third of veterans who seek care through Veterans Administration (VA) health centers receive mental health diagnoses. With more and more soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with mental health concerns, NAMI recognizes the need for increased services for veterans and their families. With our Veterans Resources Center, we have attempted to consolidate the most useful online resources. Whether you are looking for information on Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, mental illness, or how to obtain Veterans Administration (VA) benefits, we have tried to provide an extensive list of sites online where you can find that information.

This online resource offers discussion forums, support opportunities and a wealth of information about issues like particular mental health concerns, homelessness, substance abuse, public policy and much more. You can visit it anytime at http://www.nami.org/template.cfm?section=Veterans_Resources. If you don't have Internet access, please contact the NAMI Yakima office at 509.453.0753, and we can help you find the information you're seeking.



Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

NAMI Yakima has experienced a tremendous amount of growth that is allowing us to reach more deeply into our Yakima Valley communities with support, education and advocacy services. These gains would not be possible without the past and continued support of our local partners. Thanks so much!



Hello!

My name is Sam, and I am this year's NAMI Yakima Walk Team captain. My team is called Sam's Stigma Warriors, and we're on a mission to help end stigma about mental illness. Here I am on my bike at last year's Walk. There are lots of great ways you can help!



- 1.) Join our team and walk with us on May 10th in Seattle!
 - You can join online at:
<http://www.nami.org/walk>
 - Click Washington State on the map and find our team from there. We're Sam's Stigma Warriors!
- 2.) If you can't come to Seattle, you can still raise pledges locally for our team. Contact the office at 509.453.0753 or info@namiyakima.org to learn how.
- 3.) You can also donate to our team. I've set a big goal - \$3,000! - for my team to raise, so every little bit helps. You can use the form in this newsletter, or you can donate to our team on the Internet at <http://www.nami.org/namiwalks08/SEA/samswarriors>

If you have questions or need help deciding how to help us, please contact the NAMI office at 453.0753 or info@namiyakima.org
THANKS!

Samuel



Dates to Remember

Bipolar Support Group
1st and 3rd Wednesdays each month
3:30 - 5:00 p.m., Wellness House

Thursday, April 10th
Bipolar and Family Support Groups
"Clubhouses as Part of Recovery"
Dinner at 6:00, Speaker at 6:30
Groups from 7:30 - 9:00

Thursday, May 8th
Bipolar and Family Support Groups
"YVMH Psychiatric Services"
Dinner at 6:00, Speaker at 6:30
Groups from 7:30 - 9:00

Saturday, May 10th
NAMI Walk
Magnuson Park, Seattle

Thursday, May 29th
Community Symposium
Childhood Bipolar Disorder
YVMH Auditorium
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Bipolar and Family Support Groups
"Mental Health Decriminalization"
Dinner at 6:00, Speaker at 6:30
Groups from 7:30 - 9:00

June 11th - 13th
Behavioral Healthcare Conference
Yakima Convention Center

June 13th - 16th
NAMI National Convention
Orlando, FL

June 24th
NAMI Yakima Annual Meeting
5:30 - 7:00 pm
Harman Center, Yakima

Thursday, July 10th
Bipolar and Family Support Groups
Program Details TBD
Dinner at 6:00, Speaker at 6:30
Groups from 7:30 - 9:00

Save the Date

Washington Behavioral Healthcare Conference

The 19th annual Washington Behavioral Healthcare Conference will be held in Yakima June 11-13, 2008 at the Yakima Convention Center. The conference is sponsored by the Washington Community Mental Health Council with support from NAMI Washington. It features 35 workshops on a broad variety of mental health topics and is a great opportunity to connect with others from around the state who work or volunteer in the mental health field. The confirmed keynote speaker for this year's conference is renowned Washington author Sherman Alexie who won the 2007 National Book Award for Young People's fiction.

Each year during the conference NAMI Yakima hosts a quiet room for conference attendees. Conference organizers appreciate the space that is set aside for those who need a break from the hustle and bustle of the conference and it's a wonderful opportunity to showcase the work of NAMI Yakima. We need volunteers to staff the quiet room on June 12 and 13. The exact dates and times are still being worked out.

Registration materials will be available later this month. You can contact the Washington Community Mental Health Council at 206-628-4608 x12 or visit www.wcmhcnet.org. Consumer and family scholarships are available. If you'd like more information on scholarships or to sign up for a volunteer shift in the quiet room, contact Lori Gendron at the NAMI Yakima office.





NAMI *Yakima Library Book Review* Writer's Memoir Recounts the Gifts and Hardships of a Life Touched by a Mother's Illness

Donning a toga fashioned from bed sheets and sporting hieroglyphs drawn with eyeliner on her arms, the delusional Dolores regally proclaims that as the Queen of Sheba, she is bequeathing Mesopotamia to the author, her 12-year-old daughter. As Jacki Lyden states with simple eloquence, "everything happened to us after that."

Written with astonishing vividness, this harrowing yet fascinating memoir recounts the chaotic decades that follow, as Dolores's bewildering mania inspires her to recast herself variously as the daughter of a Mafia chieftain, a department store heiress, a racehorse owner, the CEO of a catering empire, and the lover of a brewery executive she's never actually met. Improperly diagnosed, and therefore lacking appropriate treatment, Dolores's manic-depressive illness dominates the lives of her family, until a reluctant legal system finally allows the author and her sisters to commit her for what proves to be successful treatment with lithium. This extraordinary tale of survival is narrated with the energy and confidence called for by the vigorous prose and the poise one would expect from award-winning radio journalist Lyden.

This and many other great books, videos, brochures, and other resources are available at the NAMI Yakima Resource Library. Stop by our office at 402 South 4th Avenue (in the CWCMH building) or give us a call at 509.453.0753 to learn more.

NAMI *Yakima Advocates Visit the Capitol* Annual NAMI Day Provides Local Supporters Advocacy Opportunities

January 21st marked this year's annual NAMI Day in Olympia. NAMI Yakima members, mental health consumers, and other supporters from across Washington state meet each year on the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday to learn more about mental health public policy and advocate for continued mental health reform. NAMI Yakima's team of advocates met with several local legislators and offered their support of issues like the decriminalization of mental health, expanded funding for clubhouses, and similar issues. To learn more about advocacy, join us for NAMI Day in 2009!



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Support Groups
Wellness House
210 S 11th Ave
Suite 40
Yakima, WA 98902

NAMI Yakima Board of Directors meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every other month at Wellness House in Yakima. NAMI Yakima is not directly affiliated with CWCMH or Wellness House. Both facilities offer space to NAMI as a service to the citizens of Yakima County and Central Washington.

402 South 4th Ave
Yakima, WA 98902
PO Box 10918
Yakima, WA 98909
509.453.0753
info@namiyakima.org
www.namiyakima.org



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Lori Gendron, Executive Director
Lori Aoki, President

Call 509.453.0753 with comments, suggestions or to learn more about NAMI Yakima